

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY NAIROBI PRIORITY

INFO AMEMBASSY CAIRO PRIORITY

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: FORG, PFOR, PSDC, KE, EG, UG

SUBJECT: INR ASSESSMENT OF POSSIBILITY OF EGYPTIAN

MILITARY SUPPORT FOR UGANDA

REFERENCE: NAIROBI 7079 (NOTAL)

1. WE CONSIDER IT MOST UNLIKELY THAT EGYPT WOULD INTER-
VENE MILITARILY ON UGANDA'S BEHALF AGAINST KENHA. THIS
JUDGMENT DERIVES FROM AN ANALYSIS OF THE NARROW EGYPTIAN
VIEW OF THE VALUE OF RELATIONS WITH BLACK AFRICAN STATES.
IT ALSO TAKES INTO ACCOUNT THE CURRENT GOOD BUT NOT SUB-
STANTIAL RELATIONS BETWEEN CAIRO AND KAMPALA AND THE
EARLIER PROGRAMS TO TRAIN UGANDA MILITARY PERSONNEL IN
EGYPT AT LIBYAN EXPENSE.

2. WE WOULD ANTICIPATE THAT EGYPT, AS A FOUNDING MEMBER

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AND STRONG SUPPORTER OF THE OAU, WOULD FOLLOW OAU LINE OF

CONDEMNATION OF ISRAEL AND LEND STRONG VOCAL SUPPORT TO UGANDA'S CASE IN UN AND ELSEWHERE. IN DOING SO, EGYPT WOULD ALSO BE SEEKING TO AVOID SITUATION IN WHICH LEADERSHIP OF SUPPORT FOR UGANDA WENT TO ARAB RADICALS, PARTICULARLY LIBYA.

3. THE PRIMARY FOCUS OF EGYPTIAN POLICY TOWARD BLACK AFRICA HAS BEEN TO GAIN SUPPORT AGAINST ISRAEL, WHILE STAYING OUT OF INTER-AFRICAN DISPUTES AND DEFLECTING REQUESTS FOR EGYPTIAN MEDIATION TO THE ARAB LEAGUE AND THE OAU. THE HIGH POINT OF THIS CAMPAIGN OCCURRED AT THE TIME OF THE 1973 WAR WHEN 37 AFRICAN STATES BROKE DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH ISRAEL.

4. SADAT IS OBSESSED WITH LIBYAN MACHINATIONS AND THE THREAT THAT "MADMAN" QADHAFI POSES TO EGYPTIAN INTERESTS. HE WOULD BE GREATLY CONCERNED BY INDICATIONS OF A MASSIVE LIBYAN INVOLVEMENT ON AMIN'S BEHALF AND WOULD THEREFORE BE INCLINED TO SUPPORT EFFORTS TO COUNTER THE LIBYAN-UGANDA AXIS.

5. INTERVENTION ON AMIN'S BEHALF WOULD DO NOTHING FOR SADAT'S DELICATE POSITION AT HOME, WHERE HE FACES POTENTIALLY SERIOUS ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL PROBLEMS, OR HIS STRUGGLE WITH THE SYRIANS FOR LEADERSHIP. A WAR IN EAST AFRICA WOULD PROBABLY BE VIEWED IN EGYPT AND ELSEWHERE IN THE ARAB WORLD, DESPITE ARAB ANGER OVER THE ISRAELI RAID, AS PERIPHERAL TO THE "REAL" STRUGGLE AGAINST ISRAEL.

6. THE FIXATION ON ISRAEL LIES BEHIND NEARLY 30 YEARS OF CAREFUL EGYPTIAN CULTIVATION OF AFRICAN SUPPORT. TO THIS END, CAIRO HAS PAID CLOSE ATTENTION TO AFRICAN LIBERATION STRUGGLES THROUGH A LARGE-SCALE PROPAGANDA CAMPAIGN THAT PORTRAYS EGYPT AS A REVOLUTIONARY, AFRICAN, AND MUSLIM STATE WHICH IS A TRUST-WORTHY SUPPORTER OF ANTI-COLONIALISM AND PURVEYOR OF TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE. THIS APPROACH IS REFLECTED IN THE STREAM OF AFRICAN VISITORS TO CAIRO, INCLUDING AMIN IN LATE MAY 1976, WHEN BOTH LEADERS STRESSED THEIR WHOLE-HEARTED SUPPORT FOR THE LIBERATION OF RHODESIA, SOUTH AFRICA, AND NAMIBIA. IT

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HAS ALSO LED OVER THE YEARS TO THE ESTABLISHMENT IN CAIRO OF BRANCH OFFICES OF AFRICAN LIBERATION MOVEMENTS. NONE OF THESE ACTIVITIES, HOWEVER, SUGGESTS TO US THAT EGYPT IS PREPARED TO ABANDON ITS TRADITIONAL POSTURE OF NON-INVOLVEMENT IN AFRICAN DISPUTES AND SUPPORT ONE SIDE OF A DISPUTE THAT DOES NOT IMPINGE ON IMPORTANT EGYPTIAN INTERESTS.

7. EGYPTIAN-KENYAN RELATIONS HAVE BEEN REASONABLY CORRECT, BUT WE BELIEVE THAT THE EGYPTIANS HAVE BEEN SUSPICIOUS OF THE REMAINING ISRAELI PRESENCE IN KENYA AND THE FACT THAT THE ISRAELI AIRLINES CONTINUE TO LAND IN KENYA. KISSINGER

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